

CLAIMS:

1. A cosmetic composition comprising: at least one polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of from 3 to 12 amino acids in length or an N-acyl derivative thereof and having anti-aging activity in an amount which is effective to treat at least one sign of skin aging and at least one ceramide capable of providing an improvement in said anti-aging activity of said polypeptide in an amount which is sufficient to provide an improvement in said anti-aging activity of said polypeptide, and at least one additional ingredient.

2. The cosmetic composition of claim 1 wherein said polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of from 6 to 12 amino acids in length.

3. The cosmetic composition of claim 2 wherein said polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of from 6 to 9 amino acids in length.

4. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 2 or 3 wherein said polypeptide includes the amino acid sequence Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly (SEQ ID NO: 1) or an analog thereof.

5. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 1, 2 or 3 wherein said ceramide is n-stearoyl-dihydrosphingosine, trihydroxypalmitamidohydroxypropylmyristyl ether or palmitamido myristyl serinate.

6. The cosmetic composition of claim 4 wherein said ceramide is n-stearoyl-dihydrosphingosine, trihydroxypalmitamidohydroxypropylmyristyl ether, or palmitamido myristyl serinate.

7. The cosmetic composition of claim 1 wherein said anti-aging activity is an ability to treat or prevent wrinkles and said at least one sign of skin aging is wrinkles.

8. The cosmetic composition of claim 1 wherein said ceramide is provided in an amount that is greater than said polypeptide.

9. The cosmetic composition of claim 8 wherein the ratio of said polypeptide to said ceramide ranges from about 1:100,000 to about 1:10.

10. The cosmetic composition of claim 1 wherein said ceramide is provided in an amount that is greater than said polypeptide, wherein said anti-aging activity is an ability to treat or prevent wrinkles and said at least one sign of skin aging is wrinkles and wherein said ceramide is trihydroxypalmitamidohydroxypropylmyristyl ether, palmitamido myristyl serinate or n-stearoyl-sphinganine.

11. The cosmetic composition of claim 10 wherein said polypeptide is Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly (SEQ ID NO: 1) or an N-acyl derivative thereof.

12. A cosmetic composition comprising: at least one polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of from 3 to 12 amino acids in length or an N-acyl derivative thereof and having anti-aging activity and at least one ceramide, wherein said ceramide is provided in an amount that is greater than said polypeptide, and at least one additional ingredient.

13. The cosmetic composition of claim 12 wherein said polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of from 6 to 12 amino acids in length.

14. The cosmetic composition of claim 13 wherein said polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of from 6 to 9 amino acids in length.

15. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 13 or 14 wherein said polypeptide includes the amino acid sequence Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly (SEQ ID NO: 1) or an analog thereof.

16. The cosmetic composition of claim 12 wherein said anti-aging activity is an ability to treat or prevent wrinkles and said at least one sign of skin aging is wrinkles.

17. The cosmetic composition of claim 12 wherein the ratio of said polypeptide to said ceramide ranges from about 1:100,000 to about 1:10.

18. The cosmetic composition of claim 17, wherein the ratio of said polypeptide to said ceramide ranges from about 1:10,000 to about 1:100.

19. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 12, 13 or 14 wherein said ceramide is trihydroxypalmitamidohydroxypropylmyristyl ether, palmitamido myristyl serinate or n-stearoyl-sphinganine.

20. The cosmetic composition of claim 15 wherein said ceramide is palmitamido myristyl serinate, n-stearoyl-sphinganine or trihydroxypalmitamidohydroxypropylmyristyl ether.

21. The cosmetic composition of claim 12, wherein said additional ingredient is a cleaning agent, a skin conditioning agent, a perfume, a sunscreen and/or sunblock for hair and/or skin, a pigment, a moisturizer, a film former, a make-up agent, a detergent, a pharmaceutical, a thickening agent, an emulsifier, a humectant, an emollient, an antiseptic agent, a deodorant, a dermatologically acceptable carrier and surfactant.

22. The cosmetic composition of claim 12, wherein said additional ingredient is an abrasive, an absorbent, a fragrance, a pigment, a coloring/colorant, an essential oil, a skin sensate, an astringent, an anti-acne agent, an anti-caking agent, an antifoaming agent, an antimicrobial agent, an antioxidant, a binder, a biological additive, a buffering agent, a bulking agent, a chelating agent, a cosmetic astringent, a cosmetic biocide, a denaturant, a drug astringent, an external analgesic, a film former, a polymer with film forming properties, an opacifying agent, a pH adjuster, a propellant, a reducing agent, a sequestrant, a skin bleaching and lightening agent, a skin-conditioning agent, a skin soothing and/or healing agent, a skin treating agent, a thickener, and a vitamin.

23. The cosmetic composition of claim 12 wherein said polypeptide is N-palmitoyl-Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly (SEQ ID NO:

1) and said ceramide is N-stearoyldihydrosphingosine in a ratio of 1:200.

24. The cosmetic composition of claim 23 wherein said ceramide is present in an amount of 4% (w/w).

25. A method of treating or preventing at least one sign of skin aging in a human comprising the steps of: obtaining an amount of a cosmetic composition which comprises at least one polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of from 3 to 12 amino acids in length or an N-acyl derivative thereof and having anti-aging activity and at least one ceramide, wherein said polypeptide is provided in an amount that is greater than said ceramide on a w/w basis, and at least one additional ingredient, and applying to the skin of a human in need of same said amount of said cosmetic composition.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein said cosmetic composition is applied to said skin once a day or twice a day for at least one week.

27. The method as in any one of claims 25 or 26 wherein said cosmetic composition is applied in an amount ranging from about 0.1 to about 10 mg/m² of skin.

28. A cosmetic composition comprising a polypeptide of formula I (SEQ ID NO: 4):

$R_1-(AA)_n-\text{Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly}-(XX)_m-\text{OR}_2$ in which $(AA)_n$ and $(XX)_m$ are peptide chains and (AA) and (XX) are the same or different and are any amino acid or derivative of any amino acid,

in which 'n' and 'm' are between 0 and 3 and

in which R_1 is H or an alkoyl chain of carbon length between C_2 and C_{22} , linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated, hydroxylated or not, containing sulfur or not, or the biotinyl group, and

R_2 is H, or an alkyl chain of carbon length C_1 to C_{24} , preferably C_1 to C_3 or C_{14} to C_{18} , or $\text{OR}_2 = \text{NR}_3\text{R}_4$, in which R_3 and R_4 are, independently of each other, H or an alkyl chain of carbon length between C_1 and C_{12} , with the proviso that if n and m are 0, R_1 is not palmitoyl or H or

R₂ is not H, said polypeptide being provided in an amount of between about 0.0001 to about 10% (w/w), and at least one additional ingredient.

29. The cosmetic composition of claim 28 wherein R₁ is lauroyl (C₁₂) or myristoyl (C₁₄) or stearoyl (C₁₈) or oleoyl (C_{18 :1}) or arachidic (C₂₀) or linoleoyl (C_{18 :2}), which n = 0 or 1, m = 0 or 1, and R₂ = H, methyl, or ethyl, or OR₂ = N-R₃R₄ in which R₃ = R₄ = H or methyl.

30. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 28 or 29, wherein said additional ingredient is a glycerol, a sorbitol, a pentaerythritol, a pyrrolidone acid and its salts, dihydroxyacetone, erythrulose, glyceraldehyde, tartaraldehyde, a colorant; a water-soluble sunscreen; an antiperspirants, a deodorant, an astringent, a keratolytic, a depilatory, perfumed water, plant tissue extract, a polysaccharide; an anti-dandruff agent; an antiseborrheic agent, an oxidant, a bleaching agent, a reducing agent, a vitamin, a steroid, a hormone, an enzyme, a vaccine, a steroidal or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory, an antibiotic, an antimicrobial, an antibactericidal, a cytotoxic, an antineoplastic agent, fat-soluble active substances selected from the group formed by the fat-soluble sunscreens, substances intended to improve the state of dry or aged skin, tocopherols, vitamins E, F or A and their esters, retinoic acid, antioxidants, essential fatty acids, glycyrrhetic acid, keratolytics and carotenoids, ceramides and pseudo-ceramides, and all lipid complexes of a form similar to that of the natural ceramides of the skin.

31. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 28 or 30, wherein said polypeptide is provided in a concentration ranging from 0.0001% (m/m) and 1% (m/m).

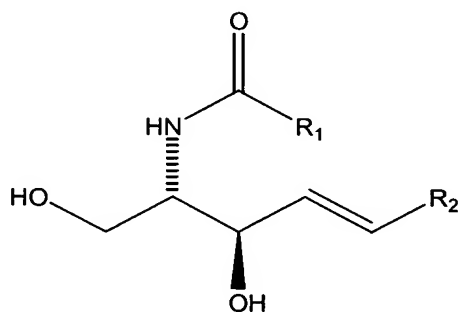
32. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 28 or 30, wherein said cosmetic composition is in the form of a solution, dispersion, emulsion, paste or powder, individually, or in a premix, or are carried individually or in a premix by vectors such as macro-, micro- or nanocapsules, liposomes or chylomicrons, macro-, micro- or nanoparticles, or

microsponges, or are adsorbed on powdered organic polymers, talcs, bentonites or other mineral carriers.

33. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 28 or 30, wherein said cosmetic composition is in the form of emollient lotions, milks or creams, milks or creams for skin or hair care, makeup cleansing lotions or milks, foundation bases, sunscreen lotions, milks or creams, artificial suntan lotions, milks or creams, shaving creams or foams, aftershave lotions, shampoos, lipsticks, mascaras or nail varnishes.

34. The cosmetic composition as in any one of claims 28 or 30, wherein said additional ingredient is selected from the group consisting of organic or hydroglycolic solvents, extracted or synthetic fats, ionic or non-ionic thickening agents, softeners, opacifiers, stabilizers, emollients, silicones, α -hydroxyacids, antifoams, fragrances, preservatives, sequestering agents, colorants, gelling and viscosifying polymers, surfactants and emulsifiers.

35. The cosmetic composition of claim 1 wherein said ceramide has the structure:



wherein the group R_1 is a fatty chain of C_{14} - C_{22} which may be saturated or unsaturated, substituted or unsubstituted, straight chain or branched and R_2 may be the same or different and is a fatty chain of C_{14} - C_{22} which may be saturated or unsaturated, substituted or unsubstituted, straight chain or branched.

36. A cosmetic composition comprising:

an N-acyl-hexapeptide in an amount of between about 100 and about 400 ppm (w/w); a ceramide in an amount of

between about 1 and about 8% (w/w); and at least one additional ingredient.

37. The cosmetic composition of claim 35 wherein said hexapeptide is Palmitoyl-Val-Gly-Val-Ala-Pro-Gly (SEQ ID NO: 1) and said ceramide is ceramide 2.

38. The cosmetic composition of claim 36 wherein said hexapeptide is present in an amount of about 200 ppm (w/w) and said ceramide is present in an amount of about 4% (w/w).